



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
COMMUNITY AND FAMILY HEALTH  
*Olympia, Washington 98504-7843*

**A PROVIDER'S INTRODUCTION TO DIRECT VACCINE DISTRIBUTION IN WASHINGTON STATE**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is undertaking an effort to centralize vaccine inventory and distribution for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program at the national level. CDC will contract with national distributors to ship vaccine directly to providers to consolidate inventories and reduce the number of times vaccine is handled during the delivery process.

In order to continue to participate in the national VFC Program and continue the Washington childhood vaccine program, adoption of direct vaccine distribution for the childhood vaccine program is required. DOH is working with local health departments to establish guidelines to ensure a successful transition. Statewide direct vaccine distribution is expected in the fall of 2006.

***Some things won't change for providers:***

- Local health departments will still:
  - Be the point of contact for providers to participate in the VFC Program and receive publicly purchased vaccine at no cost.
  - Receive vaccine orders from providers, and approve and submit them for processing.
  - Receive and monitor monthly vaccine usage accountability reports.
  - Continue to be a primary source of vaccine information and influenza planning.
  - Provide technical assistance, training and education on best practices for immunization and vaccine management, and consultation and technical assistance for provider offices.

***Some things will change for providers:***

- Once your order has been processed by your local health department, vaccines will be delivered directly to your office from the distributor.
- Providers will no longer have to, or be able to, stop in to pick-up vaccines.
- Providers will have to plan ahead with ordering, allowing time for delivery.
- Provider office staff will have to be fully trained in handling vaccines so that when vaccines arrive, they are properly stored to avoid vaccine loss.

Local health departments can assist you by training your office staff, assessing your ordering and storage needs and providing helpful reference materials. They will contact you to help you and your office staff prepare for these changes. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your local health department.

Thank you for continuing to assure that Washington children are protected from vaccine preventable diseases.